



Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • www.scdhec.gov

Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness

What Is Southern tick-associated rash illness (STARI)?	STARI is a bacterial disease transmitted to people by deer ticks. It cannot be transmitted from person to person. It is a Lyme disease like rash caused by the lone star tick. It is most commonly found from central Texas east across the southern states and along the Atlantic coast as far north as Maine. It is rarely, if ever, fatal.
What are the symptoms?	STARI is characterized by an expanding rash, mild symptoms such as fever, malaise or headache, occurring in spring or summer, and a recent history of a Lone Star tick bite at the site of the rash. These symptoms are similar to Lyme disease, but the serious complications like heart, neurological and arthritic problems are rare with STARI.
How is Southern Tick Associated Rash Illness treated?	Most people can be successfully treated with antibiotics.
How do people catch this disease?	Ticks become infected by feeding on small mammals, they then transmit the bacteria to humans and other mammals. Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness cannot be transmitted from person to person. Transmission of the bacteria from an infected tick most often occurs after a tick has been attached and feeding for 36 hours.
What can be done to stop the spread of this disease?	<p>STARI is not transmitted from person to person.</p> <p>If you will be in any area that might have ticks, wear light colored clothing so ticks can be easily spotted and removed. Wear long sleeved shirts and tuck pant legs into your socks. Using an insect repellant that contains DEET should also help reduce the risk of a tick attaching itself.</p> <p>Remove ticks promptly and clean the area with an antiseptic. Because the transmission of the bacteria is unlikely to occur in the first 36 hours of tick attachment, prompt removal of any attached ticks will help prevent infection. If a tick bites you, there are a few things that you should do. First, carefully remove the tick by grasping it with a pair of tweezers at the point closest to the skin. Pull it out slowly and steadily. After the tick is removed, disinfect the bite area. Also, make sure that you do not crush the tick because if the tick is infected, crushing it could introduce the disease into your body. Record the date on your calendar that you were bitten just in case symptoms appear later.</p>

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Region 7

Serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties

Public Health Office • 4050 Bridge View Drive • Suite 600 • N. Charleston, SC 29405 • Phone: (843) 746-3800 • www.scdhec.gov